

ISSUES FOR FRIDAY, December 15th 1939.

RELEASE TIME	NO.	SUBJECT	ORIGIN
4.25 a.m.	1	North Sea Air Battle	Air Ministry
Posted on notice board 9.40 a.m.	2	French Official Communique-Morning	Paris phone.
10. 3 a.m.	3	U Boat Prisoners of War	War Office
5. 30 p.m.	4	Control of Timber (No.6) Order	Ministry of Supply
5.15 p.m.	5	Schedule of Reserved Occupations (Amendments)	Ministry of Labour
11.5 a.m.	6	Compassionate leave for R.A.F. personnel	Air Ministry
11.38 a.m.	7	Dealings in Seed Potatoes	Ministry of Food
11.27 a.m.	8	Royal College of Art - Admission age reduced	Board of Education
12. 7 p.m.	9	Christmas Hampers from the Nilgiris	Empire Affairs
4. 6 p.m.	10	Exemption from Export licensing of Cellophane	Board of Trade
12. 47 p.m.	11	The first 8,000 W.A.A.Fs	Air Affairs
1.3 p.m.	12	Ulster Parliament	Empire Affairs
1.18 p.m.	13	Food Rationing in Ulster	Empire Affairs
1.18 p.m.	14	Wool Control	Ministry of Supply
5.40 p.m.	15	Cost of Living up.	Ministry of Labour
4.15 p.m.	16	Bank Holiday on 1st January 1940	10, Downing St. (Simultaneous release)



ISSUES FOR FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15th 1939

RELEASE TIME	NO.	SUBJECT	ORIGIN
2.24 p.m.	17	Unemployment in Clothing Trade	Ministry of Supply
2.12 p.m.	18	E.A. Press on British Naval Victory	Empire Affairs
2 p.m.	19	More Germans interned in South Africa	" "
Read out 1.45 p.m.	20	Prime Minister in France	War Office
2.41 p.m.	21	Appointment of Mr. Hatim B. Tyabji as Judge	India Office
5.30 p.m.	22	Minister of Food takes over Potato Sales Powers	Jt. Announcement by Ministries of Food and Agriculture and Scottish Dept. of Agriculture
Read out 3.52 p.m.	23	Seaplane Bases Attacked	Air Affairs
4.56 p.m.	24	Carol Singers' Lanterns must conform to regulations	Ministry of Home Security
7 p.m.	25	Advance copy of Sir John Anderson's broadcast	Ministry of Home Security
5.55 p.m.	26	Petrol for Farmers	Mines Dept.
5.48 p.m.	27	Food Prices at Dec. 1st	Ministry of Food
5.55 p.m.	28	Artists Advisory Committee	Minister of Information
5.25 p.m.	29	Australia-Newfoundland Trade Agreement	Empire Affairs
7.25 p.m.	30	Eggs for the Wounded	War Office
Read out 7.41 p.m.	31	H.M. Trawler James Ludford Mined and sunk	Admiralty
Read out 7.41 p.m.	32	Casualties of H.M.S. Achilles	Admiralty
8.8. p.m.	33	The kilt in the R.A.F.	Air Affairs



RELEASE TIME	NO.	SUBJECT	ORIGIN
Posted 8.10 p.m.	34	French Communique (Evening)	By phone from Paris
8.58 p.m.	35	Casualties of Trawler James Ludford	Admiralty
9.10 p.m.	36	Thousand Dollars for Royal Naval Benevolent Trust	Naval Affairs



NORTH SEA AIR BATTLE

(Not to be issued as an official Air Ministry announcement)

Yesterday was a day of almost unceasing activity over the North Sea by aircraft of the R.A.F. Considerable forces made wide searches for enemy surface craft and submarines. Besides these operations, there was a close reconnaissance of the estuaries and fortified islands of North West Germany.

One of the "sweeps" - as the reconnaissance flights over the sea are called - extended over the Heligoland Bight, and during this operation a formation of our aircraft engaged strong enemy fighter forces, at the same time encountering anti-aircraft fire from German warships. In the encounter, intense fighting developed, in the course of which 4 Messerschmitt fighters were shot down. One of our aircraft was also shot down and two of our aircraft are missing. All our other formations of aircraft returned without loss.

The formation which was engaged in the aerial "dog-fight" left its base for the purpose of carrying out a North Sea reconnaissance. There was slight mist and the day was inclined to be overcast with low-lying cloud. For about 2½ hours our aircraft flew over the North Sea. Then, in the distance, they saw what appeared to be warships. Closer inspection revealed a battleship and a cruiser, making towards the South. Some destroyers and a submarine were also observed. The submarine opened fire and then dived for safety. Within a few moments of the warship's being sighted, our aircraft were engaged by German fighters - and then ensued a desperate fight.

The fighters found our pilots and our gunners ready for them. But the contest was not only with an enemy in the air, for the anti-aircraft guns of the warships opened fire. Black and white bursts surrounded our



aircraft. When the - 2 -  
gunfire ceased, another <sup>/wave</sup> of fighters would attack our aircraft.  
Six times this happened, with the guns from the ships firing  
during the short intervals between the fighters' attacks.  
The fight lasted nearly half-an-hour. For the first 15  
minutes it looked as though the Germans were going to escape  
any real punishment, but then a twin-engined German fighter  
fell in flames into the sea. A few minutes later, another  
German fighter met the same fate, and these two were followed  
by a third and a fourth. In the engagement one of our  
aircraft was shot down; two others are missing. Our  
aircraft returned to their base after dark - barely half-  
an-hour overdue.

During the close reconnaissance of the fortified islands  
on the coast of North West Germany. our aircraft in order  
to obtain the information they required. were at times flying  
just below the cloud base and at less than 100 feet above the  
island fortifications. Visibility varied from as little as  
300 yards to as much as 6 miles, and though the sudden appearance  
of low-flying aircraft took the anti-aircraft defences largely  
by surprise, several batteries opened belated fire, but without  
success. An enemy fighter also came up to engage one of our  
aircraft, but the pilot took cover in the prevailing low clouds,  
and, having eluded the fighter, emerged to continue his  
interrupted reconnaissance. After circling the islands, and  
in one case, our aircraft completed their task and returned  
safely to their bases after a successful reconnaissance of nearly  
5 hours duration



15.12.39

-

No. 2.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE.

The following official communique was issued  
from French G.H.Q. this morning:-

Nothing of importance to report.

-----oOo-----



15/12/39 - No 3.

U BOAT PRISONERS OF WAR

The following officers and men are prisoners of war in this country:

ROTTERS, Hans Joachim	Leutnant zur See
MAY, Erich Berthold	Funkmaat
JANSSEN, Wilhelm	Mechaniker (Unteroffizier)
MARX, Gerhard	Maschinenobergefreiter
JACOB, Wilhelm	Mechanikerobergefreiter
KIENAST, Siegfried	Maschinengefreiter

WAR OFFICE  
S.W.1.

+++++



MINISTRY OF SUPPLY.

PRESS NOTICE.

The Minister of Supply announces that he has made the Control of Timber (No. 6) Order 1939 which reduces from £20 to £5 the limit of value of timber which may be purchased without a licence (but subject to declaration) for work of national importance or urgent necessity.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY,  
THE ADELPHI, W.C.2.

15th December, 1939.



Schedule of Reserved Occupations.

The Ministry of Labour and National Service announce the following changes in the Schedule of Reserved Occupations:-

I. The following new entries have been made in the Schedule:-

<u>Occupation.</u>	<u>Age of Reservation.</u>
Driller (minerals)	25
Signal and telegraph maintenance and repair man (rail transport)	23
Cleaner (qualified train, carriage, wagon, brake, etc. examiner) (rail transport)	25

## II. In the case of the following occupations, the ages of reservation have been reduced as shown below:-

<u>Occupation.</u>	<u>Former age of Reservation.</u>	<u>Amended age of Reservation.</u>
Full-time member of fire salvage corps	30	18
<u>Glass maker, glass house worker</u> (excluding optical glass)		
Gatherer, ladler, ball maker (hand blown glass)	25	18
Glass blower (hand)	25	18
<u>Lens Maker, Prism Maker.</u>		
Cutter, splitter, slicer (optical element)	21	18
Rougher, rough grinder (lenses, prisms) (optical element)	21	18
Smoother (optical element)	21	18
Lens polisher, prism polisher (optical element)	21	18
Centerer, edger, edge grinder (optical element)	21	18
Rough edger, mirror edger, (optical element)	21	18
Single lens worker (optical element)	21	18
<u>Quartz Glass Worker, Silica Glass Worker.</u>		
Foreman (charge hand)	21	18
Furnaceman, mixer	21	18
Blower, blow-pipe worker	21	18
Cutter, grinder	21	18
<u>Rail Transport.</u>		
Permanent way (including engineering) maintenance and repair man	30	25
Porter (qualified signalman)	30	25
Porter (qualified guard)	30	25
Porter (qualified shunter)	30	25
Train, carriage, wagon, brake, etc. examiner	30	25



III. The following other changes in the Schedule have been made:-

The occupation of Porter (qualified goods checker) (rail transport) is now included as a separate item with a reservation age of 30.

The entry "Mechanical navvy driver" has been amended to read "Mechanical navvy driver, mechanical excavator driver, drag line operator". The age of reservation remains unchanged at 25.

The occupations "Telegraphist - Post Office" and "Telegraphist - other than Post Office" have now been included as one item "Telegraphist, cable operator". The age of reservation is still 25.

The procedure for dealing with certain classes of men under the age of 25 by Technical Committees associated with University Joint Recruiting Boards now covers the following classes:-

- (a) Men with University degrees in Engineering (including Naval Architecture), Metallurgy, Chemistry, Physics, Geology, the Biological Sciences (including Agriculture) and Mathematics (including Statistics);
- (b) Men with Higher National Diplomas or Higher National Certificates in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering, or with the Associateship of the Institute of Chemistry;
- (c) (i) Men who have completed to the satisfaction of the University at least one year's work of a course for specialised honours degree in Engineering (including Naval Architecture) Metallurgy, Chemistry, Physics, Applied Mathematics, Geology, and the Biological Sciences (including Agriculture);  
(ii) Men who have started or are about to start their final year's study for the Higher National Diploma or Higher National Certificate in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering or for the Associateship of the Institute of Chemistry.

IV. These amendments have no retrospective effect; men who were in these occupations in civil life and are now serving with His Majesty's Forces are not affected by these decisions. It should be understood that the Schedule of Reserved Occupations is provisional and is subject to revision from time to time. Men who are of or above the age of reservation for their occupation will not, so long as the relevant entry in the Schedule stands, be called up for service with His Majesty's Forces.

Press Office  
Ministry of Labour and National Service,  
Montagu House, Whitehall, S.W.1.

Telephone: Whitehall 6200.



15.12.39

No. 6.

AIR MINISTRY.

Compassionate Leave for R.A.F. Personnel.

The Air Ministry announces:

In the event of dangerous illness of a near relative, personnel of the Royal Air Force serving at Home or in France may be granted compassionate leave.

Applications from relatives or friends for the granting of such leave should be made as follows:-

Officers: Application should be addressed to the Air Ministry (D.P.S.) Kingsway, London, W.C.2. supported by a full statement of the case, with a medical certificate. The rank, name and unit and (if known) the officer's number should be quoted.

Airmen: Application should be addressed to the Officer in Charge Records, Royal Air Force, Ruislip, Middlesex, supported by a full statement of the case, with a medical (or police) certificate. The airman's official number, rank, name and unit (if known) should be quoted.

Every endeavour will be made to grant compassionate leave where the circumstances justify it but owing to the exigencies of the Service this will not always be possible.

AIR MINISTRY,  
WHITEHALL,  
S.W.1.

-----oOo-----



MINISTRY OF FOOD ANNOUNCEMENT

Dealings in Seed Potatoes.

The Ministry of Food wish to remind seed potato producers and merchants that:-

(1) The Seed Potatoes (Maximum Prices) Order, 1939, affects all potatoes which come within the scope of the definitions in the Order. Other potatoes may not be sold for seed unless a licence has first been obtained from the Ministry of Food, Potato Section, St. John's College, Oxford. Such licences would cover, for example, the sale for replanting of potatoes on higher or lower ridges than those specified in the Order, varieties not in the Schedules, "twice-grown" seed, or other potatoes for which special provision has not been made.

(2) Under the Order a "grower-dealer" who has purchased a crop of potatoes in the ground, or a "grower-merchant" who has grown a crop of potatoes may not charge more for the seed than the maximum prices prescribed in the Schedules if he sells direct as a grower.

(3) The Order does not affect contracts entered into before 4th December, and no alteration need be made in the terms of such contracts as a result of the making of the Order.

+++++++



15.12.39

- No. 8.

BOARD OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCEMENT.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART.

AGE OF ADMISSION TO BE REDUCED.

The Board of Education announce that the age of admission to the full-time Diploma courses of the Royal College of Art during the 1940/41 session will be reduced from 19 to 18 to allow students to complete at least one year's study before being called up for military service.

No separate prospectus for 1940/41 will be issued but all information as to the dates of the College terms and instructions regarding the submission of application forms for candidates for admission to the College or for Royal Scholarships and Exhibitions may be obtained on application to The Registrar, Royal College of Art, South Kensington, S.W.7.

-----oOo-----



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS FROM THE NILGIRIS

GIFT FROM INDIA BATTALION TO FRONT LINE BATTALION.

A sum of over £260, collected at a total expense of less than £1, from residents in Ootacanund and the tea-planting districts of the Nilgiris, South India, has been received by the Overseas League as a first consignment to the Hamper Fund.

Over 250 £1 hampers will be despatched to the Front as Christmas gifts to the troops, any balance being devoted to the Tobacco Fund. With fifty hampers a special greeting card is being enclosed:- "Greetings and good luck from the First Battalion, India", to the battalion of the same regiment now on active service.

-----oOo-----



15/12/39 - No.10.

BOARD OF TRADE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Exemption from Export licensing of cellophane.

The Board of Trade have made an Order under which licences will no longer be required for the export of transparent cellulose wrapping after 16th December.

Board of Trade,

15th December, 1939



THE FIRST 8,000 W.A.A.F.S.

SOME CHANGES IN OCCUPATION

(Not to be quoted as an Air Ministry announcement).

Among the first 8,000 members of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, whose training is now approaching completion, are many whose present duties are in sharp contrast to their previous occupations.

And the way they are fitting in to these duties is another instance of human adaptability to changing circumstances.

One was a ballet dancer, another a music hall artiste. A third was a newspaper reporter and a fourth a race horse owner.

At one R.A.F. Station a country veterinary surgeon is in the equipment section in charge of clothing; a professional pianist is an equipment assistant; an artist in modelling is working as a clerk; a composer of music is performing - successfully - as a cook.

An American dress designer is driving a car. Other occupations for which no equivalent could be found in the W.A.A.F. are represented by a crooner, a commercial traveller, and a trainer of gun dogs.

Every effort is naturally made to find work suitable for the qualifications of the woman concerned. A great many are following their peacetime occupations in uniform. Among these are chartered accountants, teleprinter operators, telephonists, shorthand typists and kitchenmaids. A qualified dietician is helping to arrange diet sheets.

A woman who is driving light lorries once drove a lorry for three months alone through the African jungle. She was at one time in sole charge of a leper colony in South Africa.



ULSTER PARLIAMENT.

There will be no State ceremonial at the opening of the new session of the Ulster Parliament next Tuesday.

The Governor of Northern Ireland, the Duke of Abercorn, will read the King's Speech in the Senate, and after the debate, for which two days are allotted, Parliament will adjourn until February.

-----



FOOD RATIONING IN ULSTER.

On and after tomorrow (Saturday) retailers and caterers in Ulster will be able to purchase their butter supplies only from the wholesalers who have been nominated by them as their sources of supply and whose names appear on the buying permits issued by the Local Food Committees.

Retailers must lodge their buying permits and supplementary permits with their nominated wholesalers not later than tomorrow.

-----



15.12.39

- No.14.

PRESS NOTICE.

WOOL CONTROL.

Under the Defence Regulations, 1939, the Minister of Supply has made two further Orders which relate to wool produced in the United Kingdom (other than the Orkneys, Shetlands and Outer Hebrides).

The first of these (The Control of Wool (No. 9) Order, 1939) brings into force on the 15th December, 1939, new maximum prices for ungraded farmers' clips. The second Order (The Control of Wool (No.10) Order, 1939) requisitions wool still owned by farmers. Provision is also made for securing returns in regard to such wool, and the owners are required to comply with any directions issued as to the removal, transport, keeping, storage, disposal or delivery of such wool.

Copies of these Orders will shortly be on sale, and may be purchased from H.M. Stationery Office, or through any bookseller.

All enquiries should be addressed to the Wool Control, Bradford.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY,  
THE ADELPHI,  
W.C.2.



PRESS NOTICE.

15/15.12.39.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE.

CHANGES IN COST OF LIVING DURING NOVEMBER.

The Ministry of Labour and National Service announces that at 1st December, 1939, the official cost of living index figure was 73 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, as compared with 69 per cent. at 1st November, 1939. The rise of 4 points (i.e. from 169 to 173, the figure for 1914 being 100) is equivalent to nearly  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

For food alone, the index figure at 1st December was 57 per cent. above the level of July, 1914, showing a rise of 3 points, or about 2 per cent., since 1st November, when the figure was 54 per cent. above the level of July, 1914.

The rise in the index figure for food was due mainly to increases in the prices of eggs, fish, bacon and cheese. Among items other than food, the principal changes were increases in the prices of clothing, coal and gas.

Press Office.

Ministry of Labour and National Service.

Telephone, Whitehall 6200.

H.Q.383-490 L.I.



15/12/39 - NO. 16.

PRESS NOTICE.

NOT TO BE BROADCAST OR PUBLISHED IN THE  
PRESS OR ON THE CLUB TAPES BEFORE THE  
MORNING OF SATURDAY, 16th DECEMBER, 1939.

---

Bank Holiday on 1st January, 1940.

The Treasury announce that it is proposed that Monday, the 1st January next, should be observed as a close holiday in all Banks in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the necessary Proclamation for the purpose will be submitted to His Majesty at the next Council.

It should be clearly understood that this proposal is made solely in order to enable the Banks, whose staffs are depleted by the war, to attend without interruption to the work of that day and that the day will not be a general holiday for the public.

TREASURY.

15th December, 1939.



15/12/39 - NO. 17.

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY NOTICE.

There is no danger of unemployment in the clothing trade in this country through a falling off of orders from the Ministry of Supply, Lord Woolton, Director General of Equipment and Stores, at the Ministry of Supply, indicated today.

"The War Office has told us what they want for the next twelve months", Lord Woolton said. "Clothing production for the week ended 14th December reached the highest figure attained since the outbreak of the war. The Ministry of Supply, with full knowledge of War Office requirements for the next twelve months is able to say that an increase of at least 25 percent over the present maximum production is required to provide for the needs of the army during that period.

"This position should give some assurance to workers in the clothing trades, many of whom, I understand, are concerned lest the drop in civilian demands should cause widespread unemployment in the trade. Naturally, more clothing will be required as the army increases in numbers, and quite apart from that, as present clothing wears out".

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY.

PRESS OFFICE.



S. A. PRESS ON BRITISH NAVAL VICTORY

"TRADITION MOST WORTHILY MAINTAINED".

The South African Press to-day pays tribute to the British cruisers' attack on the Nazi pocket battleship, Admiral Graf Spee.

The Rand Daily Mail says: "A tribute to the splendid fighting spirit shown by the officers and men of the British Navy in this combat would, of course, be superfluous.

"To say that their tradition has been most worthily maintained would probably be all that any of them would desire. Nevertheless, those who benefit so much by their action will not be able to withhold their warmest admiration -- and of those South Africans are amongst those most directly concerned.



EMPIRE AFFAIRS.

15.12.39 - No.19.

MORE GERMANS INTERNED IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Eighty more Germans have been interned in South Africa, including Dr. Anton Obholzer, a Professor at the University of Stellenbosch.

-----oOo-----



15/12/39 - No.20.

The War Office,  
Whitehall, S.W.1.

The War Office announces that the Prime Minister,  
The Rt. Honourable Neville Chamberlain M.P. has  
arrived in France to spend a few days with the British  
Expeditionary Force.

-----oOo-----



15/12/39 - No. 21.

C O M M U N I Q U E

For Immediate Publication.

(Simultaneous publication in India has been arranged).

The King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. Hatim B. Tyabji as a Judge of the Judicial Commissioner's Court, Sind, in the vacancy that will occur in February next on the retirement of Mr. Muhammad Havelivala.

-----oOo-----

INDIA OFFICE



15th December, 1939

No.22  
M.A.F.116

JOINT ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES AND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR SCOTLAND.

POTATOES.

Under the Potatoes (Sales by Growers) Order made by the Minister of Food certain of the regulatory powers exercised by the Potato Marketing Board are being taken over by the Minister of Food. The Order takes effect on 20th December.

Growers, when selling potatoes, must now observe the regulations made by the Ministry of Food regarding riddles, standards of dressing, terms of sale, grades and the persons to whom they may sell. The minimum riddle applying to all sales of potatoes for human consumption remains at 1½".

Sales by growers are permitted generally as under the previous Potato Marketing Board Regulations, and most of wholesale merchants who held a Certificate of Authority at the outbreak of war, will shortly receive a licence from the Ministry of Food, and will thereafter become licensed merchants. Certain wholesalers and importers who have not hitherto found it necessary to be authorised by the Potato Marketing Board and also auctioneers who held Letters of Authority from the Potato Marketing Board at the outbreak of war, will receive licences.

Sales by growers to retailers, caterers, institutions and other consumers will be allowed to continue for the present.

Every person engaged in the buying or selling of potatoes is required to keep records of his dealings at his place of business.

Growers are required to satisfy themselves that their wholesale customers are licensed by the Ministry of Food. Pending the issue of a printed list of licensed merchants, preliminary lists will be available at the offices of the National Farmers' Unions of England and Scotland and at the offices of the Area Supervisors of the Potato Section of the Ministry of Food.

The above Order necessitates the suspension of the principal provisions of the Potato Marketing Scheme. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Secretary of State for Scotland have accordingly made the Potato Marketing Scheme, 1933 (Modification and Suspension) Order, 1939, which will also come into force on 20th December, 1939.

The effect of this Order is that the regulatory functions of the Potato Marketing Board, including the power to make levies on registered producers, will be suspended during the war. The Order also removes all restrictions on excess plantings of potatoes.

There will be no meetings of registered producers and no new registrations of producers. Producers who were registered on 20th December, 1939, will continue to be registered in the books of the Board, but the requirements that producers may not sell potatoes unless registered under the Scheme will not be operative while the Order is in force.

The Board will not be disbanded, but the Order provides for its remaining functions to be delegated to an Emergency Committee, whose principal duty will be to safeguard the assets of the Board in the interests of the registered producers.

The Orders are being printed in the Statutory Rules and Orders Series. Copies will shortly be obtainable either direct, or through, any bookseller, or from H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway, W.C.2.; 120 George Street, Edinburgh, 2.; 26 York Street, Manchester, 1.; 1 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff.



15/12/39 - No.23.

AIR MINISTRY BULLETIN.

Seaplane Bases attacked.

The Air Ministry announces :-

Aircraft of the Royal Air Force again patrolled the bases of Borkum, Norderney and Sylt during last night and the early hours of this morning.

Enemy seaplanes observed at moorings were attacked with bombs.



For Press and Broadcast.

15/12/39. - No. 24.

CHRISTMAS CAROL SINGERS.

No restrictions have been made to prevent Carol singers or bands from taking their traditional part in the Christmas festivities this year; but if they wish to carry lanterns, these must conform with the regulations concerning hand-lamps.

Handbell-ringing out of doors is prohibited under the Control of Noise Order.

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY.



A D V A N C E   C O P Y   O F   B R O A D C A S T  
by

Sir JOHN ANDERSON, HOME SECRETARY,

following 9 o'clock news tonight,  
December 15th, 1939.

---

I want to say a few words to you about the new form of street-lighting which I announced yesterday in the House of Commons.

I know from personal experience how trying blackout conditions are, especially in contrast with our peace-time street-lighting, which is probably the best in the world. But if anything like ordinary lighting were allowed it would enable raiding aircraft at night, not only to reach our big cities, but to pick out the vital targets which we must protect by all means at our disposal.

What we had to find, therefore, was a new form of street-lighting which would be of some help to people who have to find their way about after dark but at the same time would give no help at all to enemy aircraft. Let me make one point clear. The danger is not, as many people think, in light which casts its beams upwards. If it were, the difficulty could be met by the use of a shield which would throw the light on to the ground. What makes a town visible to aircraft is the pool of light on the ground which is reflected upwards, and the problem has been to bring the light down to an intensity which would help the pedestrian without producing this effect.

After many experiments, tested by the Royal Air Force from the air, this problem has now been solved, with the assistance of the lighting engineers. The new fittings needed will be produced as rapidly as possible: and, as supplies of these fittings become available, the new lighting will be installed throughout the country - though, for the moment, the



Government must reserve their decision whether this lighting can be allowed on the East and South-East coasts.

I have seen this lighting myself in the area where it was tested. I don't claim that it is cheerful. But it certainly enabled me to move about with far more confidence and freedom than I could in the full blackout; and that, I think, is the real test.

One word of warning. While we must keep the blackout, we have found that we can safely allow some necessary lighting in trains, trams and buses and in places like shipyards, railway sidings and docks; and now we have moved a further step forward by allowing a new form of street-lighting. But the amount of this new lighting is carefully controlled; and, now that we have this extra light, it is more important than ever that we should all be as careful as we can to avoid unauthorised light in houses and shops.

I should have been delighted if, at this Christmas time, I had been able to give you cheerful streets and really bright shop windows. But the blackout is an essential part of our air defences. This is not just my view. It is the considered judgment of the Air Staff. And I know that every one of you will agree that it would be wrong to sacrifice one of our main weapons of defence for the sake of our personal comfort and convenience.

-----



15/12/39 - No.26.

MINES DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

PETROL FOR FARMERS

Farmers and others engaged in agriculture are reminded that the new system of petrol distribution by coupons begins on January 1st, 1940. The present temporary arrangements expire on December 31st. After that date farmers will not be able to buy petrol for agricultural purposes without coupons.

In view of the approach of the Christmas holidays, applications for coupons should be sent at once to Divisional Petroleum Officers. A special form is required which can be obtained from local taxation offices or Post Offices at which motor licensing business is transacted, and from County Secretaries of the National Farmers' Union. The address of the Divisional Petroleum Officer for the District is obtainable from the same source as the form.

Farmers and others, including ploughing contractors, should note that the scheme is for the supply of petrol for agricultural tractors, stationary engines, and vans and lorries operating on an "F" licence. Farmers' private motor cars and lorries operating on Carriers' licences are not included.

Although it is essential to achieve economies in petrol consumption wherever possible, supplies will not be restricted for genuine agricultural purposes. Farmers are therefore urgently requested in their own interests to apply without delay.

---



# MINISTRY OF FOOD,

GREAT WESTMINSTER HOUSE, HORSEFERRY ROAD,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

27  
P.N.160.

## PRESS NOTICE.

### FOOD PRICES AT DECEMBER 1st.

The official Cost of Living Index Figure shows a rise of about 2 per cent. in the retail prices of food during the third month of the war.

A rise in the price of eggs was the largest factor. Fish, bacon and cheese also show some increases, but none of these items by themselves accounted for more than a fractional change in the index. These increases are largely attributable to a continuance of the difficulties affecting imported supplies which are inevitable in war-time. Fish prices fell heavily in the previous month, but have now risen again. In addition to the inevitable fluctuations in the size of catches, the supply of fish has been influenced recently by the requisition of trawlers for war service.

Since the outbreak of war the total rise in the Cost of Living has been rather less than 12 per cent. but in interpreting this figure in terms of the individual housewife's budget, some allowance may be made for war-time changes in her habitual purchasing. The Index is necessarily based on the assumption of an unchanged family diet, but changes in price alone may lead the housewife to choose alternative articles, replacing an article which has become more expensive or scarce by something else. It is a general presumption that articles which have risen in price are those in shorter supply. In the case of butter, for instance, our national consumption has fallen. The alternative is margarine, supplies of which have been increased to fill the gap. It is a much cheaper article. The change-over may mean some sacrifice of personal taste, but it is the result of war conditions.

In the case of bacon the housewife has the choice of various alternative foods. The effect on her purse will vary according to the choice she makes. She will usually seek the alternative foods which are to be had at reasonable prices. Herrings in particular have been in plentiful supply recently.

15th December, 1939.



PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Minister of Information announces the appointment of an Artists' Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Kenneth Clark, K.C.B., "to draw up a list of artists qualified to record the war at home and abroad; in co-operation with the Service Departments, and other Government Departments, as may be desirable, to advise on the selection of artists from this list and on the arrangements for their employment; and to advise on such questions as copyright, disposal and exhibition of works and the publication of reproductions."

The members of the Committee in addition to the Chairman are as follows:

Sir Walter Russell, C.V.O., R.A.,

Sir Muirhead Bone, LL.D., D.Litt.,

Mr. P.H.Jowett, R.W.S.

The Admiralty, War Office, Air Ministry, Ministry of Home Security and Ministry of Information, are also represented on the Committee. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Artists' Advisory Committee, Ministry of Information, Senate House, London University Building, Malet St., W.C.1.



AUSTRALIA-NEWFOUNDLAND TRADE AGREEMENT

A Bill approving the Australian-Newfoundland Trade Agreement has passed all its Parliamentary stages. Proclamations have been issued fixing yesterday as the date on which the Australian-British preferential tariff will be extended to cover news-print paper, mentioned in this Agreement, and also as the date of the beginning of the Act.

+++++++



The War Office,

London, S.W.1.

15th December, 1939.

EGGS FOR THE WOUNDED.

Britons in the Argentine are sending home thousands of eggs for sick and wounded British soldiers, sailors and airmen. Already nearly 100,000 have been despatched.

The scheme is being organised by Mr. H.F.M. Merness of Buenos Aires, who in the last war started a similar fund. Between 1916 and the end of the war over a quarter of a million eggs were collected and sent to the United Kingdom for the benefit of wounded men. In April this year Mr. Merness volunteered to re-open the fund in the event of war, and his offer was promptly and gratefully accepted by His Majesty's Government.



15/12/39 - No.31.

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Secretary of the Admiralty regrets to announce that H.M. Trawler JAMES LUDFORD, (Lieutenant Cdr. H.R.J. Lewis, R.N.,) has been mined and sunk. It is feared that two officers and fifteen ratings have been lost. Next of kin have been informed.

ADMIRALTY,  
S.W.1.



15/12/39 - No. 32.

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Secretary of the Admiralty regrets to announce the following casualties sustained in action by H.M.S. Achilles on 13th December, 1939, next of kin have been informed.

Casualties from other ships engaged will be issued as soon as received.

KILLED

GRANT, I. W.	Ord. Seaman	NZD/SS 1734
MILBURN, N. J.	Ord. Tel.	D/SSX 23288
SHAW, A. C. H.	A. B.	NZD/1030
STENNETT, F.	Tel.	D/JX 148899

WOUNDED

MARTINSON, L. C.	-	NZD/345
SHERLEY, E. V.	A. B.	NZD/1163
TRIMBLE, S. J.	Sgt. R. M.	PO/22169

+++++

ADMIRALTY, S. W. I.



(NOT TO BE QUOTED AS AN AIR MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENT)

THE KILT IN THE R.A.F.

There are kilts in the Royal Air Force. The two kilted bagpipe-bands of the Royal Air Force are now busily preparing for Christmas and Hogmanay.

These bands are attached to Auxiliary Squadrons in Scotland and they both wear the grey Douglas tartan, which was approved by King George V and was a gift from the Duke of Hamilton.

The first band was formed in 1929 and the second six years later.

There are 22 men in the older band - 12 pipers, a pipe-major, 8 drummers and a drum-major. It has also a team of Highland dancers.

These men are drawn from all ranks - fitters, riggers, wireless operators and transport drivers.

Before the war, the pipe-major was a Post Office sorter. Now he is a drill instructor. The drum-major was a tractor driver and green-keeper on a golf course. Now he drives a staff car.

He is the only drum-major who swings a mace specially designed for the Royal Air Force. Gilt wings surmount its silver knob, which bears the crest of the R.A.F. and of the Squadron. It was bought out of money subscribed by the men and ceremonially presented to the drum-major by the C.O. on Armistice Day, 1938.

During the residence of the Lord High Commissioner at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the local military unit is usually called upon to supply pipers for at least one evening. The R.A.F. bagpipe-band has attended on one occasion.

Sometimes the two kilted bands combine, as when they performed together at Dungavil, the Duke of Hamilton's seat.

At Christmas and on New Year's Eve, they will entertain at camp concerts and in the Officers' Messes.

AIR MINISTRY.  
KING CHARLES STREET.  
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.



15/12/39 - No. 34

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE (Evening)

The following official communique was issued from French G.H.Q. this evening:-

A few encounters between the advanced units in the region immediately to the West of the Vosges.

---oOo---



15/12/39 - No.35.

ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

The Secretary of the Admiralty regrets to announce the loss of the following personnel in the sinking of H.M.Trawler JAMES LUDFORD. Next of kin have been informed.

MISSING. BELIEVED DROWNED.

OFFICERS.

Lieutenant-Commander H.R.J. Lewis, R.N.

Chief Skipper D.MacArthur, R.N.R.

RATINGS.

Allam, G.L.	Petty Officer	P/J.104781
Bourner, L.	Signalman	P/J.109164
Carpenter, A.	Stoker	P/K.61240
Crichton, A.	Seaman, R.N.R.	79890
Graham, M.	Seaman, R.N.R.	X.76180
Kay, C.H.	Stoker.	P/K.56987
Main, A.K.	Seaman, R.N.R.	X.18718A.
Matheson, A.	Seaman, R.N.R.	X.77650
Meredith, M.W.	Seaman, R.N.R.	X.73130
Mitchell, J.	Leading Seaman, R.N.R.	6092D.
Parfitt, T.P.	Chief Mechanician	P/K.26982
Pocock, S.J.	Stoker.	P/SS.121559
Stowell, W.C.	Seaman, R.N.R.	X.10322B.
Treagus, A.F.	Supply Petty Officer.	P/K.23304
Warwick, S.	Leading Stoker.	P/KX.77134.

---

ADMIRALTY,  
S.W.1.



(Ref. to 15/12/39 - No.35).

In Admiralty Communique announcing list  
of casualties in H.M. Trawler James LUDFORD,  
the number of each of the following ratings  
should be amended to read:

CRICHTON, A.	Seaman R.N.R.	7989 C
GRAHAM, M.	Seaman R.N.R.	X.7618 C
MEREDITH, M.W.	Seaman R.N.R.	X.7313 C



FROM NAVAL AFFAIRS

15/12/39 -No 36

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, which is the Central Benevolent Organization for assisting the men of the Royal Navy and their dependents, has received an anonymous donation of One Thousand Dollars, from a lady living in Toronto, Canada, to be devoted as far as possible to the needy of the dependents of the men who perished in H.M.S "Courageous" and H.M.S. "Royal Oak". The donor of this generous gift has sent it as an expression of her deep sympathy with the men of the Royal Navy and their wives and families and her appreciation of the great work that the Royal Navy is doing in these critical times.

-----